

Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 21, 2013
6:30-8:30pm EST
LMAS District Health Department, Newberry, MI

Chair: Dick Pershinske Vice-Chair: Glenn Moll Secretary: Ginny Giddings

Council Members Present

Tom Buckingham	Michael Lawless
Phil Dennis	Glenn Moll
Gary Ellenwood	Dick Pershinske
Al Garavaglia	Chad Radka
Jason Garvon	Richard Serfass
Gary Gorniak	Jim Shutt
Jim Hoy	Sara Wall
Bernie Hubbard	

Council Members Excused/Absent

Bill Becks	Tim Hass
Jim Duke	Mike Patrick
Ginny Giddings	

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Liaisons

Greg Andrews, Economic Development Liaison, Marquette
Kristi Dahlstrom, Executive Assistant, Marquette
Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement, Newberry
Christina Hammill, Facilities & Operations, Newberry
Rich Hill, Parks & Recreation Division, Newberry
Terry Minzey, Wildlife Division, Newberry
Steve Scott, Fisheries Division, Newberry
Jon Spieles, Education & Outreach, Newberry
Jeff Stampfly, Forest Resources Division, Newberry
Stacy Welling Haughey, Upper Peninsula Regional Coordinator, Marquette

Call To Order

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council (EUPCAC) meeting was called to order at 6:34pm EST by **Chair Pershinske**.

Chair Pershinske welcomed everyone for attending. He also welcomed and introduced six new members to the Council who attended a brief CAC orientation just prior to the meeting:

- Bernie Hubbard, Independent
- Al Garavaglia, representing Hudson Township
- Jim Shutt, representing the Michigan Charter Boat Association
- Rich Serfass, representing the Michigan Forest Association
- Phil Dennis, representing the Hiawatha Sportsmen's Club
- Sara Wall, Independent

Adoption of Agenda

Chair Pershinske asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda; none were brought forth. **Mr. Buckingham motioned to adopt the agenda as presented; Mr. Lawless seconded the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Becks, Mr. Duke, Ms. Giddings, Mr. Hass, and Mr. Patrick. Motion carried.**

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Chair Pershinske asked the Council if there were any corrections to the minutes as presented; none were raised. **Mr. Lawless motioned to approve the December 6, 2012 EUPCAC Meeting minutes as submitted; Dr. Garvon seconded the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Becks, Mr. Duke, Ms. Giddings, Mr. Hass, and Mr. Patrick. Motion carried.**

Chair Comments

Chair Pershinske indicated that he attended the Wolf Advisory Council last Tuesday as a member. He explained the advisory council is mandated by law, under Public Act 520, and is made up of 21 members, including the DNR Director, also by law. They are charged with making recommendations to the DNR at least once a year. Meetings can be rather contentious because of the many facets that are represented and the interests of each individual. Chair Pershinske stated he has been involved with the wolf issue for over 12 years. There is also a referendum being circulated by the US Humane Society.

Chair Pershinske welcomed Congressman Dan Benishek's representative, Mr. Dan Blough, to the EUCPAC meeting and asked if he had any comments. Mr. Blough stated that Congressman Benishek has been appointed to the Committee on Agriculture and Committee on Natural Resources. He has also been appointed to several subcommittees. The Congressman is very interested in the state's natural resources and currently has pending legislation.

Public Comment

- Ms. Pat Wright, secretary of the Chippewa County SORVA group, distributed a map to the Council displaying two ORV trails being proposed by the group. She explained the trails are all on county roads or open forest roads. The county has approved use of the county roads. They have also received support from township governments and businesses in nearby towns. In a few weeks, they will be presenting their proposal to the Hiawatha National Forest for their approval to use the open forest roads. Once they receive approval, a formal request will be submitted to the DNR. The group is interested in getting these trails designated by the DNR so they can be signed, be safer, and have maps, which will result in increased tourism dollars for the eastern U.P.
 - **Mr. Lawless** asked who will be the grant sponsor; Ms. Wright replied the Eastern U.P. Trail Development Association, established last year, will be the grant sponsor.
 - **Mrs. Welling Haughey** asked if she is working with the DNR trails staff; Ms. Wright replied she is working with Mr. Ron Yesney and Mr. Rob Katona.
 - **Mr. Gorniak** asked if she was aware of monies from an outside source appropriated to do a research study for connecting trails in the same forest; Ms. Wright replied yes, it is a survey and map-making grant.

- **Mr. Ellenwood** asked if the Hiawatha National Forest is opposed to the proposal; Ms. Wright stated they met a year ago and requested a map be developed showing which open forest roads they would like to use before giving approval.

Chair Pershinske suggested Ms. Wright return to the EUPCAC in April to provide an update on the status of approval from the Hiawatha National Forest, and at that time, if the Council wishes, support can be offered towards the DNR proposal.

- **Mr. Don McLean**, Chippewa County Commissioner and also a member of the SORVA group, is involved in the process Ms. Wright explained as well. He feels this project is extremely significant as the DNR will be accepting the designation of these trails. He stated it is very important to get support from the EUPCAC since Council members represent several groups.

Officer Elections

Chair Pershinske noted the Bylaws require the Council to have an officer election at the first meeting of each year. He opened the floor for nominations for 2013.

- *Chairperson:* **Mr. Buckingham** nominated Mr. Pershinske; **Mr. Pershinske** accepted the nomination. **Mr. Buckingham motioned to close nominations after no additional nominations were received; Mr. Lawless supported the motion.**
- *Vice-Chairperson:* **Mr. Hoy** nominated Mr. Moll; **Mr. Moll** accepted the nomination. **Mr. Buckingham motioned to close nominations after no additional nominations were received; Mr. Pershinske supported the motion.**
- *Secretary:* **Chair Pershinske** indicated that Ms. Giddings has chosen not to accept a nomination for Secretary this year. **Mr. Buckingham** volunteered for the position. **Mr. Lawless motioned to close nominations after no additional nominations were received; Dr. Garvon supported the motion.**
- **Chair Pershinske** indicated that nominations have been received for each position and asked for a motion to approve the nominations. **Mr. Lawless motioned for a unanimous consent of the nominations received; Dr. Garvon supported the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Absent: Mr. Becks, Mr. Duke, Ms. Giddings, Mr. Hass, and Mr. Patrick. Motion carried.**
- *Mr. Pershinske remains Chairperson for 2013, Mr. Moll remains Vice-Chairperson for 2013, and Mr. Buckingham is the new Secretary for 2013.*

Reports

1. *Stacy Welling Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator:* **Mrs. Welling Haughey** added a few updates to items not included in her written report, but were previously discussed by the EUPCAC.
 - The Crisp Point Project was signed by the Director and the transaction did go through. She thanked the Council for their support.
 - In regards to the limestone quarry, at this time, the DNR has not received a formal proposal of any kind.
 - In regards to the Land Cap, the DNR is in the middle of land management reconstruction and she hopes to have more of an update in April.
 - She spoke with Mr. Adam Bump regarding the Nuisance Animal Control Permits. Mr. Bump indicated he did not anticipate any new information on this issue by this EUPCAC meeting. Any update, if available, will be provided at the April meeting.

- She stated that Senate Bill 78, which addresses biodiversity, has been in the press recently. The bill is currently in the Senate committee and the Governor's office has not yet taken a position on it.
2. DNR Division Reports: Written staff reports were provided to Council members on February 14, 2013. The following are current updates to those reports.
- Steve Scott, Fisheries Division: **Mr. Scott** noted he did not have any further updates to add to his written report.
 - Jon Spieles, Education & Outreach Division: **Mr. Spieles** indicated that free fishing weekend went very well with several children and family oriented programs being held. Bay City had 1200 participants. In the West U.P., the severe below zero temperatures prevented any attendance.
 - Greg Andrews, Economic Development Liaison: **Mr. Andrews** indicated he is interested in trails and economic development. He will be at the Trails Update Meeting on March 18th. He stated he is also the new ADA coordinator for accessibility within the DNR. If anyone has ideas, let him know.
 - Terry Minzey, Wildlife: **Mr. Minzey** distributed copies of a comparison of resident and non-resident hunting license fees in selected states. The handouts are related to the Governor's proposed license fee increase package in his recent budget request. The proposal is not coming from the DNR. **Mr. Minzey** stated 1997 was the last time any type of monetary increase in license fees occurred. The proposed package takes the current 227 licenses down to 31. He explained the different fees included in the proposal. If the proposal is approved by the legislature, Michigan would still be tied for the lowest deer hunting fee in the nation next to Hawaii.
 - **Mr. Ellenwood** questioned the lack of a small game or waterfowl fee in the proposed package. **Mr. Minzey** stated the DNR cannot lobby for these fees; he encouraged Mr. Ellenwood to contact his legislators.
 - **Chair Pershinske** asked for an explanation of the process in how this package will move forward. **Mrs. Welling Haughey** stated it is part of the legislative process. It will go through the House and the Senate, usually will be modified, and if approved, the final package will be sent back to the Governor for signature. This proposal is different than 20 years ago when the DNR asked for a fee increase; the Governor is proposing it as part of his budget package. The DNR and the Council will have input. A presentation can be provided at the next meeting, local legislators can be contacted for information, or it can be presented at the Joint UPCAC meeting as well.
 - **Mr. Lawless** thinks the fee increase is too conservative of a request. The license agent reimbursement needs to be restructured; many operated at a net loss last year as they absorbed all the credit card fees.
 - **Mr. Radka** asked if the \$18 million revenue increase was an entire increase; **Mr. Minzey** replied yes.
 - **Chair Pershinske** asked if placing this topic on the Joint UPCAC agenda in March would be too late; it was felt the timeframe would be fine.
 - **Mr. Moll** stated the NRC notes on the budget in the division reports were difficult to understand; **Mrs. Welling Haughey** stated that she took brief notes while she was at

the NRC meeting. A more definitive description will be available in the NRC minutes on the website.

- **Mr. Serfass** questioned why there isn't a crossbow season in the late season. **Mr. Minzey** replied the hunters of the U.P. requested to the NRC not to have a crossbow season in the late season. He further explained the history behind the decision, yarding of deer and the snow impact. **Mr. Serfass** asked about antler restrictions in the U.P.; **Mr. Minzey** indicated a report will be forthcoming on the agenda under Old Business. **Mr. Serfass** asked also about deer surveys and those that didn't respond; **Mr. Minzey** replied the survey process Mr. Serfass referenced was an old process.
- Rich Hill, Parks & Recreation: **Mr. Hill** stated a draft dredging plan relative to harbors is posted on the DNR Waterways Commission website. Attention has been shifted to boating access sites and needs for next season. He will keep the Council updated.
- Jeff Stampfly, Forest Resources: **Mr. Stampfly** noted also in the Governor's proposed budget package was a substantial increase in an emergency fund, housed in the state police budget, to deal with natural disasters, such as the Duck Lake Fire.
 - **Mr. Radka** asked if the Crisp Point Project property will be managed as a new compartment area; **Mr. Stampfly** replied yes, it will be rolled into the compartment review process. Within the next three years, it will come up in inventory and rolled into the process.
- Lt. Skip Hagy, Law Enforcement: **Lt. Hagy** noted there were several crossbow violations late in the season. In reference to the Governor's proposed budget package, there are monies for more conservation officers. The Law Enforcement Division is going through strategic planning and several constituent groups are meeting with the division to give their perspectives. They are down 5 officers in the eastern U.P. with current staffing. **Lt. Hagy** also discussed the recent downtime of the licensing system for updates and how an increase in snowmobile riders due to the snowy weather caused a need for licenses during this time.
 - **Mr. Lawless** commented it would've been helpful if the license sale agents had information about enforcement during the license system downtime. Discussion ensued. **Mrs. Welling Haughey** stated that she has discussed the issue at staff meetings and ideas were given to enhance communication next time.

Old Business

1. Agenda Survey Topic #2/Forest Management Activities: **Mr. Stampfly** stated at the December 2012 EUPCAC meeting, Mr. David Price provided a presentation of the regional state forest management plans, explained the process and the management areas (36 in the eastern U.P.) and how those management areas are made of up compartment units. The deadline for public comments on the plan has been extended to March 8, 2013. There is still time to add comments, and he encouraged individuals and groups to do so. Currently, the Forest Resources Division staff are grouping feedback received to date into similar categories as the state forest is used for a variety of reasons. So far, comments received pertain to climate change, detailed harvest, motorized trails, recreational uses, habitat, other ownerships, featured species and management, no net loss of aspen, and some are specific to a particular management area. After the deadline, once all comments are received, there will be public

meetings held. Overall, based on comments and feedback, some items will warrant additional discussion, such as should recreation be included in these plans, and the inclusion of other state plans like MDOT. **Chair Pershinske** asked if equine representatives have been involved. Mr. Stampfly indicated that he hasn't seen any comments so far that are specific to equine use. **Chair Pershinske** asked if there were any questions from the Council; **Mr. Moll** indicated he was looking for something more in depth. **Mr. Stampfly** stated that he is available for questions and the plan is on the website for full review.

2. Agenda Survey Topic #3/Deer Management: **Mr. Buckingham**, as the EUPCAC representative for the UP Deer Advisory Team (UPDAT), provided a report on the recent UPDAT meeting held January 18, 2013 in Iron Mountain. He noted that Mr. Kevin Erickson in the audience is also on the UPDAT. **Mr. Buckingham** stated the discussion at the meeting focused strictly on antler point restrictions with six options being presented. He reviewed each option based on the handout that was provided in the Council's meeting packets. Hunter's Choice with a single tag modification was the first choice of the EUPCAC according to email responses he received from Council members. UPDAT's recommendation is to be submitted by April. In regards to management goals, **Mr. Minzey** explained there is pressure to raise the age of the buck stature to 2 ½ years. With current regulations, the percentage of bucks in harvest in the 2 ½ to 3 ½ year old class was the highest since the 1950's. 5 ½ year old bucks are basically non-existent.
- **Mr. Ellenwood** asked if the analysis is online; **Mr. Minzey** replied he will send a copy to Council members. The UPDAT was broken down into two groups, population and habitat, to evaluate. He stated deer habitat areas are being remapped now.
 - **Chair Pershinske** asked if the age to allow hunters to participate was discussed; **Mr. Minzey** stated there was no in depth discussion on that topic. He stated it would be a good discussion for the EUPCAC. He noted members of the NRC like to encourage more young hunters.
 - **Mr. Serfass** asked what the percentage is of hunters who use the second tag; **Mr. Minzey** indicated when combining bow and rifle hunting, approximately 7%. For rifle hunting, only 2%.

Mr. Minzey stated there will be open houses later this summer across the peninsula to give everyone an opportunity to review and discuss the recommendations. He added the proposed license fee package was not released and was not discussed at the January UPDAT meeting. If the license fee package is approved through the legislature, the UPDAT will have to discuss how their recommendations would be affected.

3. Wolf Update: **Mr. Minzey** provided an update on the wolf management plan and current status. He stated legislation was passed months ago making the wolf a game species in Michigan. As part of the legislation, a Wolf Advisory Council was created to provide recommendations to the NRC and legislature. Despite a referendum being circulated state-wide to garner a public vote to put the wolf back on the endangered species list, and the likelihood of the movement going through, and with a lawsuit against the US Fish & Wildlife Service challenging the delisting, the Michigan DNR is moving forward in following the management plan. It will be the NRC's decision to determine whether to or not to have a hunt. If a hunt is allowed, it will be for management purposes only, not a recreational hunt.

The management plan is specifically set up to handle management issues only, such as livestock depredation and public safety (such as in Ironwood). If wolves are having a significant impact on deer populations, the management plan does allow a hunt, although, there is no current survey data to substantiate the issue. It is a very emotional issue. Several meetings will be held to take public input. ~~In this area, a meeting will be held on March 14 in Newberry from 6-8pm at the high school auditorium; attendance is encouraged.~~ **(*NOTE: Since the time of note-taking, the March 14 Newberry meeting has been cancelled.)** Other meetings will be held in Ironwood on March 12, Marquette on March 13, Gaylord on March 19, and Lansing on March 21. Public input received will be brought back to the Wolf Advisory Council.

- **Chair Pershinske** discussed attendance of county farm bureau representatives at a meeting showing a large amount of support for the wolf management plan. He provided a few number facts from the most recent meeting, including the number of wolves collared, dog kills, depredation events and dollars paid to farmers for loss of animals. **Mr. Minzey** indicated the Wildlife Division is in the process of conducting a wolf survey this year. The lowest estimate of wolves is at 687, and based on statistical measures from Michigan Tech University, the wolf count figures are very reliable.
- **Mr. Gorniak** asked why it's thought the population is leveling off; **Mr. Minzey** replied the numbers are leveling off within 7% from year to year. In comparison with the early 90's to now, it is substantially leveling out.
- **Mr. Garavaglia** asked what impact the wolves have had on the furbearer trade; **Mr. Minzey** replied there is no real data available. Certainly wolves feed pretty heavy on beavers.
- **Mr. Gorniak** asked about the deer index. **Mr. Minzey** stated that he hasn't reviewed it in the last three weeks considering the snow received. He will look into it and respond back to Mr. Gorniak.

New Business

1. **Agenda Survey Topic #4/Income & Recreation:** Before beginning on this particular topic, **Chair Pershinske** asked Mr. Ellenwood and Mr. Moll if they had any suggestions for future agenda items. **Mr. Ellenwood** suggested information on programs that are provided with gas and oil monies. **Mr. Moll** indicated with such a dynamic climate, an increase in license fees is key. He personally thinks users need to pay and more enforcement is needed. **Mr. Scott** commented with regards to users needing to pay, the DNR does far more than what users would actually pay for. **Chair Pershinske** asked Council members to consider this topic and others and email suggestions to him or Mrs. Dahlstrom.

Next Meeting

1. **Joint Meeting on March 18th:** **Chair Pershinske** stated the Joint UPCAC Meeting with the WUPCAC will be held on Monday, March 18th at Northern Michigan University in Marquette. Meeting details will be forthcoming.
2. **Next Meeting Date:** **Chair Pershinske** noted the next regular meeting of the EUPCAC will be held on Thursday, April 18th at the LMAS District Health Department in Newberry.
3. **Topics for Next Agenda:** **Chair Pershinske** stated suggested topics were previously discussed.

Public Comments

- Mr. Stephen King provided Council members with an issue of Newberry News, which included a picture he took of the Naubinway marina and boat launch. He provided a historical perspective on past dredging efforts at the marina. He applauds the Governor's efforts in his proposed budget for dredging and the Waterways Commission; however, he hopes that it will be done right this time so money isn't wasted again. **Mr. Hill** stated at a previous EUPCAC meeting, representatives from the Waterways Commission presented and answered questions in regards to this marina. There are several factors involved in this particular dredging project. It is an important harbor to the DNR. Mr. King also distributed a copy of a proposed project at the Father Marquette site; he briefly explained the museum concept and stakeholder support. **Chair Pershinske** noted there is an effort to create a Mackinac County Economic Development Alliance which may be a resource.
- Mr. Kip Cameron commented in regards to the youth hunt discussion. He stated it's a good thing for the youth to get involved and hope that doesn't change. As for mentoring youth, he hasn't heard of one hunting accident with youth. With the bad winter in this area, he suggests going to one deer regardless, with a gun or crossbow. He questioned if a moose survey was being done in the eastern U.P. **Mr. Minzey** explained the differences in moose population between the east and western U.P. and why a survey is not being done in the eastern U.P. He stated that preliminary figures indicate a 20 animal increase (approximately 2%) in the western U.P. since the last survey. This information will be given to the NRC for consideration.
- Mr. Les Homan stated the Forest Resource Division has done a phenomenal job with the Duck Lake timber harvest. He thanked Mr. Jim Dzelak for his efforts in helping with a race; everyone appreciated his help. He also complimented Mr. Jon Spieles and Mr. Rich Hill for Ms. Teresa Neil's help with brochures and signage for a new ski trail. He thanked the DNR staff from a public perspective.

Closing Comments from the Council

- **Chair Pershinske** stated this Council has had an opportunity for three years to do significant things. The group hasn't scratched the surface on what they can do. He challenges Council members to do research on topics they wish to be discussed and bring them to the Council. He believes the Council can have additional input that can benefit the citizens of Michigan and also make it easier for DNR staff to do their jobs.
- **Mr. Lawless** spoke in regards to the youth hunt, stating there have been several conversations in his store on hunting and fishing. Based on his own poll on how his customers got involved in hunting, 100% began with small game. He stated he is in favor of youth hunting deer, but there seems to be a lot of emphasis on deer, and they are missing the boat on small game. **Mr. Minzey** indicated several initiatives to accentuate small game management and recognizes Mr. Lawless' comments.
- **Mr. Serfass** reminded the Council if anyone has any property in QFA, Senate Bills 52, 53, and 54 changes requirements. He suggested a review of the bills for potential effects on QFA landowners.
- **Mr. Radka** indicated some members of the Council have been working on education of forest and vegetative management, and they have plans to educate the Council. **Chair Pershinske** added the Council may want to focus on creating a subcommittee at their next meeting.

- **Mr. Moll** stated the Council should be knowledgeable about forest management because state land is 99% forest.
- **Mr. Buckingham** stated he concurs with Mr. Radka and Mr. Moll.
- **Mr. Hoy** stated in response to youth bypassing small game, in his way of thinking, it's too easy with baiting, although he doesn't see this practice changing.

Adjourn

There being no further business, **Chair Pershinske** adjourned the meeting at 8:45pm EST.

Approved 4/18/13